

"Nay" on rollcall No. 299, an amendment by Mr. FLAKE, No. 3, to H.R. 5631, Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2007.

"Aye" on rollcall No. 300, an amendment by Mr. HINCHEY, No. 1, to H.R. 5631, Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2007.

"Aye" on rollcall No. 301, an amendment by Mr. HINCHEY, No. 2, to H.R. 5631, Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2007.

"Nay" on rollcall No. 302, an amendment by Mr. FLAKE, No. 6, to H.R. 5631, Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2007.

"Nay" on rollcall No. 303, an amendment by Mr. FLAKE, No. 7, to H.R. 5631, Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2007.

"Nay" on rollcall No. 304, an amendment by Mr. FLAKE, No. 9, to H.R. 5631, Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2007.

"Yea" on rollcall No. 305, final passage of H.R. 5631, Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2007.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 21, 2006

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, June 19, 2006 I missed rollcall votes Nos. 289, 290, and 291. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on H.R. 5540, H.R. 5504, and H. Res. 826.

RECOGNIZING BLAKE WILLIAMS FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 21, 2006

Mr. GRAVES. Mr. Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Blake Williams, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 495, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Blake has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Blake has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Mr. Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Blake Williams for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

WORLD REFUGEE DAY

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 21, 2006

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize World Refugee Day, which is the international community's day of remembrance and action on behalf of the more than 20 million refugees, who have been driven from their

homes because of war, famine, and natural disaster. World Refugee Day is intended to raise awareness of the plight of these millions of people, but more importantly, it is about the recognition that we have the power to help them and that we must.

To Americans who are blessed with the comforts of 21st Century living and an abundance of food, it is difficult to conceive of the intolerable and degrading existence in which nearly all refugees live. Today, as individuals and as a Nation, we must pledge to redouble our efforts to work with our allies, the United Nations and other regional organizations to help alleviate the suffering of the world's refugees and to address the causes that have created the world's refugee population.

As we speak, millions of Darfurians in Sudan have been driven out of their homes by the armed Janjaweed militia. Huddled in pitiful camps and under constant threat of attack, the Darfur refugees live on inadequate food and with little or no shelter. Their crops are destroyed. Their livestock have been killed and thrown into wells, poisoning the water. Their villages have been burned to the ground. Darfuri women are systematically raped, including young girls who venture out of the refugee camps for firewood.

What we are seeing in the largest country on the African continent is genocide: a calculated means of annihilating a group of people, robbing them of their chance at livelihood. International aid workers and a thin force of African Union peacekeepers are all that stands between them and death.

Addressing the refugee crisis is not only a humanitarian endeavor; it also contributes to our national security. Refugee camps have long been recognized as prime breeding grounds for extremism. As we have seen throughout the last century, wars that force large numbers of people from their homes result in regional instability, threatening American interests and our security. American and international aid can do much to ensure that refugee camps do not become the birthplace of more violence and terrorism.

While refugees are most often associated with war, it is important to recognize today that natural disasters also force people out of their homes. The Asian tsunami and the Pakistani earthquakes have created millions of displaced people and desertification and rising sea levels which are the result of climate change will create millions more.

Mr. Speaker, it is easy to associate the word "refugee" with a nameless, faceless person. We must remember that refugees are mothers, fathers and children, whose lives have been destroyed by war nature's wrath.

Today we acknowledge our common humanity and pledge that every day be a day of action on behalf of those who have no voice.

DECLARING THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL PREVAIL IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

SPEECH OF

HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 15, 2006

Mr. WEINER. Mr. Speaker, as we stand here today, there is no way to argue that this

war in Iraq was not badly undermined by bad planning based on bad intelligence and an abject failure to organize the international community in a meaningful way.

In short, the American people and Congress would clearly answer this question in the same way. If we knew then what we know today would we have done everything the same? Certainly not.

This is a common sense message despite the fact that the Administration is reluctant to see it. I would suggest that there is another thing that we all agree upon: the extraordinary work of the men and women who are over there fighting on our behalf, and the remarkable heroism they've shown in the face of a mission that seems to constantly change and the hostility of many Iraqis.

Yesterday, we mourned the 2,500th fatality. There have been 18,000 injuries and those of us in New York have lost 118 of our neighbors.

I believe the military mission in Iraq has been completed and our troops should be redeployed in a way to preserve the accomplishments that they've achieved and to further our objectives of defeating terrorism and stabilizing the region.

At the outset of the war the President articulated and many of us agreed that Saddam Hussein had to be removed. Our military achieved that. And there have been elections in Iraq that our military helped make happen.

Standing up of the infrastructure has been painfully slow. A Brookings Institution study that came out today showed that we still have not reached pre-war levels of oil production or available electric power.

Yet to the extent that roads and bridges and infrastructure have been created or restored in Iraq, it was through the good work of the men and women of the United States Armed Forces. There have been reports of over 30,000 Iraqi civilian deaths, clean water is scarce, and unemployment hovers above 50 percent.

The question we have today as inartfully and politically posited as my friends on the other side articulate it, is how do we honor the work that has been done so far and how do we adapt to the situation that we've found?

This notion of barreling ahead while our troops become the target of so many attacks is misguided. The number of daily attacks by insurgents in May of 2003 was 5; in May of 2006 it was 90. The total number of insurgents has increased from 3,000 to 20,000 during the same time period. And Iraq has become a training ground for jihadists, with an increase in the number of foreign fighters from 100 in May 2003 to 1,500 in May 2006.

I support the position of Congressman JACK MURTHA and General Anthony Zinni, and agree with General George Casey, who said in September 2005 that, "the perception of occupation in Iraq is a driving force behind the insurgency." Now the burden lies with the Iraqi people, and our troops standing in the middle of this battlefield have become targets rather than a force for stability and peace.

As Mr. MURTHA has observed, 100,000 Shi'as fighting 20,000 Sunnis amounts to civil war, even if we choose to call it "sectarian violence." Incidents between warring Iraqi factions are up from 20 in May of last year to 250 in May of this year.

We should redeploy our troops to the horizon of the battle, out of harm's way, but close

enough to ensure that in the future the insurgents and terrorists do not take hold in Iraq.

It is time for our military presence in the Middle East to be converted to a powerful quick-reaction force outside of Iraq. 80 percent of Iraqis want us out of their country and 47 percent say killing Americans is justified.

Then, we should reallocate the funds being spent in Iraq, which dwarfs the combined budgets of all other programs in place to fight terrorism, and re-engage with the countries around the world that rallied behind us in the wake of 9/11 but were alienated by our conduct in Iraq.

Some have suggested that taking the target off the backs of our troops by removing them from the center of this conflict would lead to chaos. Implicit in that critique is the suggestion that we don't have chaos today. Our troops' presence there, I believe, is allowing Iraq's citizens a convenient excuse for failing to take responsibility for their destiny.

The Iraqi people clearly would like us to leave and permit them to govern. Our troops have expressed the same sentiment. And it is clear that if we are to reclaim our place on the world stage as a unifying force for democratic values and the ideals of our country, the way to start is to redeploy so we can be ready for future challenges.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT (BOB)
LECLERCQ

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 21, 2006

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to honor and acknowledge Robert (Bob) Leclercq as he completes his distinguished career as a firefighter in Garden City, Michigan.

Bob has dedicated his life to helping the citizens of Michigan. Upon graduation from East Garden City High School in 1970, he joined the National Guard as a Medical Corpsman in the Mobile Army Surgical Hospital, Unit 2077, of Detroit. Bob began his career as a firefighter in Garden City on October 30, 1979. During 23 years of honorable and dedicated service, he advanced through the ranks from Firefighter to Engineer to Lieutenant and ultimately to Captain.

For two decades, Bob has vigorously pursued additional education and specialized training, including Advanced Firefighting, EMT Specialist, Pump Operator, and Hazardous Materials courses. He has also served as Trustee, Secretary, and currently as President on the International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 1911 Executive Board. In addition, Bob started two beneficial community programs: one, which teaches CPR classes; the second, which takes blood pressures at the senior tower. In 1986, the Jaycees recognized Bob's contributions with the Michigan's Top Ten Outstanding Young People Award.

At this milestone in Bob's life, let us reflect upon the decades of his dedication; let us remember the scores of lives which have been touched by his benevolence; and let us not forget the bravery and courage with which he served and protected. His friends and family are inspired by his accomplishments, honored by his loyalty, and ennobled by his exemplary love for neighbor and community.

Mr. Speaker—Bob's wife, Brenda, his children, Bob Jr. and Sherri, and his grandson, Drake, have ample reason to celebrate. In honor of his commitment to protecting all the citizens of Michigan and of his legendary dedication to improving the lives of Garden City residents, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Bob for his years of service to our community and our country.

DECLARING THAT THE UNITED STATES WILL PREVAIL IN THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERROR

SPEECH OF

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 21, 2006

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, this resolution will not ensure any success in Iraq. It will not bring our troops home. It will only signal the death of true, honest debate within the walls of this great Chamber.

For many more years than any of us have been alive, this House, the People's House, has been democracy's citadel for intelligent, meaningful, real debate that has led to solutions to some of history's most important and vexing crises.

The charade that many on this floor are attempting to pass as a debate today does a great disservice to those monumental American leaders who have spoken from this same floor over the past two centuries. It does a great disservice to the American public, which expects its leaders to lead, not pander. And it does a great disservice to our military men and women who are depending on us to work together and complete our mission so that they may complete their mission and come home. Today's so called debate is politics at its worst—we're playing politics while U.S. men and women are being killed, wounded and kept away from their families.

Mr. Speaker, I remember lying in a military hospital bed just home from Vietnam while Congress played politics—it was disdainful then and when I think of those brave men and women I've visited at Walter Reed Hospital, Bethesda Hospital and Ramstein Hospital in Germany—it makes me sick today. Let's do our job and bring our troops home as soon as possible.

For weeks we have been told, and the American people have been promised, by the Republican majority that there would be a debate on this floor on the Iraq war. Instead, we get what the news is reporting as "Republican election year strategy." Mr. Speaker, this charade represents a shameless dereliction of our duties and a missed opportunity to provide the American public with the open and honest debate they have been demanding for the past 3 long years now.

This feel-good resolution ignores the issues most important to the men and women serving in Iraq, their families and the taxpayers who have already been billed nearly half a trillion dollars.

It ignores the issues raised by some of our most respected generals. Just listen to what a few have said about the Administration's rush to war:

"We are paying the price for the lack of credible planning, or the lack of a plan."—General Anthony Zinni

"What we are living with now is the consequences of successive policy failures."—Lieutenant General Greg Newbold

"They pressed for open warfare before the diplomacy was finished. It was a tragic mistake. It's a strategic blunder."—General Wesley Clark

This resolution ignores the lack of accountability and oversight that's led to some of the most egregious and embarrassing examples of waste, fraud and abuse on record, such as: \$9 billion in missing reconstruction funds.

\$263 million in excessive or unsubstantiated costs for importing gasoline into Iraq.

Over \$20 million for items that weren't delivered, including:

Security for civilian flights at Baghdad International Airport that never occurred; non-existent pipeline employees; old and broken down trucks; spray-painted Iraqi cranes passed off as new; police trucks; and a refurbished police academy and library. And millions more have been wasted at taxpayer expense due to no-bid and over-billed contracts awarded by the Bush administration.

This resolution ignores how the civilian leadership of the Defense Department grossly miscalculated the armor and equipment needs of our troops before sending them into combat, which resulted in:

40,000 troops who didn't have basic Kevlar vests or the ceramic plates needed for full protection, which left parents and spouses to buy body armor for their loved ones;

30,000 Marines who needed twice as many heavy machine guns, more fully protected armored vehicles and more communications equipment to perform their operations successfully;

Soldiers who were issued boots with cheap and soft soles that quickly wore out, thus having to sew material to the bottom of their boots out of desperation;

Soldiers who went to combat with inadequate or poor field radios, ammo carriers, weapon lubricant, socks and even rifle slings;

Military units that were deployed without the necessary armor needed to protect ground vehicles, making them vulnerable to IEDs. And when our troops jerry-rigged them with steel playing, they often flipped or rolled-over, injuring or killing soldiers;

And soldiers who subsequently had to sift through garbage dumps for scrap metal to uparmor ground vehicles.

Mr. Speaker, if you are in charge, you are responsible. That is why several respected generals have cast a vote of no confidence with our civilian leadership of the Defense Department for its lack of planning:

Rumsfeld and his team turned what should have been a deliberate victory in Iraq into a prolonged challenge.—Major General John Batiste.

I do not believe Secretary Rumsfeld is the right person to fight that war, based on his absolute failures in managing the war against Saddam in Iraq.—Major General Charles H. Swannack, Jr.

They only need the military advice when it satisfies their agenda.—Lieutenant General John Riggs

If I was President I would have relieved him three years ago.—Lieutenant General Paul K. Van Riper

Two and a half more years of that leadership was too long for my nation, for my Army, and for my family.—Major General Paul Eaton

Mr. Speaker, we need to be working non-stop to bring our troops home as soon as possible, not to score political points while they